

Strachan, D.P., Elton, R.A. "Relationship Between Respiratory Morbidity in Children and the Home Environment" Family Practice 3: 137-142, 1986.

SUMMARY: The relationships between 12 features of the home environment and respiratory morbidity as reported by parents, and as recorded in general practice records, were studied in 165 children aged seven to eight years. Parental reports of wheeze, nocturnal cough and school absence owing to chest trouble were significantly more common among children with a family history of wheeze, and those from damp or mouldy housing. There were associations between coal fires and nocturnal cough and between an open window and wheeze. Multivariate analyses confirmed these associations to be independent of each other, and of the child's sex and seven other features of the home environment, including gas appliances and parental smoking. These same environmental variables were not consistently related to general practice consultations for wheeze or lower respiratory illness. Damp and mouldy housing, coal fires and open bedroom windows should be investigated further as potentially remediable causes of respiratory disease in childhood.

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